

# Grey Highlands Public Library

Annual Report  
2023



# Message from the Mayor



I want to congratulate all the dedicated staff of our library system on completing another successful year. 2023 has been a year of significant achievements and strides for our library system, highlighted by the much-anticipated improvements and renovations to the Markdale Branch. These enhancements have revitalized the space and expanded our capacity to serve our community more effectively. The upgrades, carefully designed to accommodate the evolving needs of our patrons, have injected new vitality into our library, making it a more welcoming and resourceful space for all.

In addition to the physical transformations, we've also made leaps in upgrading our technology. These advancements have revolutionized how our community interacts with our resources, enabling easier access to digital services and a more seamless user experience. This technological leap has positioned the Grey Highlands Library System at the forefront of modern library services, ensuring we remain adaptable and responsive to the digital age's demands.

As we celebrate these milestones, I am thrilled to welcome Eleni Hughes as our new Library CEO. Eleni brings a wealth of experience and a fresh perspective that promises to guide our library into a new era of excellence and innovation. Under Eleni's leadership, I am confident that our library will continue to grow, evolve, and enrich our community in countless ways.

The future is bright for the entire Grey Highlands Library system. As we venture into 2024 and beyond, we are committed to expanding our reach, enhancing our services, and creating spaces that inspire, inform, and connect. Our journey forward is one of endless possibilities, and together, with the support of our staff, volunteers, and community, there is no limit to what we can achieve.

# Message from the Board Chair



Our Library system had a banner year in 2023. My thanks go out for help from a great Board, an excellent CEO/Chief Librarian (Jennifer Murley) \*, and her dedicated staff. We welcomed financial support from our three Friends groups along with the support from many donors and with continued financial support from the Municipal Council and Province of Ontario.

Our retired (2021) CEO Wilda Allen had planned and created unique designs for two outdoor pavilions. One for the Markdale Library and one for the Flesherton Library. Due to Covid restraints the actual building was delayed until 2023. The projects were built by Valley Homes and construction was supervised by CEO Murley and grants and donations covered the costs. They are now ready for your use please visit when you can and enjoy the great outdoors and a good book.

The Markdale Library was built in 2000 & needed a [Re] Fresh. With prudent cost management and countless hours of staff time along with many young volunteers some walls were painted, and new flooring was installed, and a streamlined new layout was created. There is still more to be done in 2024.

The Municipality provides the Library with Treasury and Human Resources services. In 2023 the Library clarified its relationship with the Municipality and the first Memorandum of Understanding was signed. We thank our CEO Murley and Grey Highlands CAO Karen Goven for making this happen.

Our biggest challenge and greatest success were the development of the new 2023-26 Strategic Plan. We hired professional consultants, paid for with a Provincial grant, and this team along with our dedicated Strategic Plan committee spent weeks together and came up with a new strategic plan. We are proud of it and want to thank those that took the time to answer our survey. Our Mission is: To engage and connect the community through innovative programs, services and information. You are encouraged to visit us in person and online because we are more than a repository for books, we are a community hub.

\*Please note that CEO Murley moved on to a new CEO position for a Library/Museum in an adjoining municipality. We welcomed our new CEO Eleni Hughes, who has over ten years in library management, on Dec.1/23.

# ~2023~

## A Year in Review



**Walter Harris Memorial Branch received a refresh with new flooring, layout and painting of the board room.**

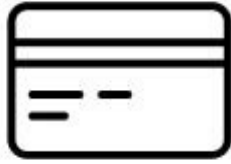


**The Municipality approved the release of development charges for the library to increase access to technology and creation of a Makerspace.**



~2023~

# By the Numbers



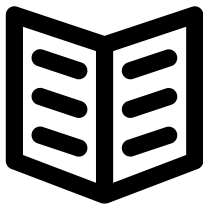
**LIBRARY CARD  
REGISTRATIONS**

**515 +37%**



**PROGRAMS OFFERED**

**251 +70%**



**ANNUAL CIRCULATION**

**35,058 +8%**



**4077 VIEWS**

**115+ HRS WATCHED**

**PROGRAM ATTENDANCE**

**3666 +50%**

**ACTIVE LIBRARY USERS**

**6303**

**60.5% OF GREY HIGHLANDS  
POPULATION**

# 2023 - 2026

## A New Strategic Plan

In 2023, the Library Board and Staff worked diligently to create a new Strategic Plan. Gathering feedback and suggestions through surveys and discussions, they heard how the community wanted to see an increase in programs, technology, and enhanced spaces for children to play and explore. The Strategic Plan outlines our mission, values, strategic goals, and vision that will guide our endeavours for the next three years as we continue to empower our residents through knowledge, innovation and accessibility.

### VISION

The place to inspire,  
explore, discover, and  
create.

### MISSION

To engage and connect the  
community through innovative  
programs, services, and  
information.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

CULTURAL LEADERSHIP

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

COMMUNITY FIRST

SERVICE GROWTH

DIGITAL INCLUSION



**GREY HIGHLANDS**  
**PUBLIC LIBRARY**

*The place to inspire, explore, discover, and create.*

# Looking Ahead



At the end of November 2023, I was honoured to be hired as the CEO/Chief Librarian for the Grey Highlands Public Library. As I settled in, getting to know the staff at the library, staff at the Municipality, and members of the community, I quickly learned the beautiful gem that Grey Highlands is within this province. I also became aware that the Library plays a big part in creating connections within this community, mostly through the positive and impactful interactions between our dedicated staff and community members.

The Library had a very busy year under the leadership of Jennifer Murley. New pavilions were constructed using grant funding and generous community donations. Expansion of technology offered the community STEAM kits, a Mechanoid robot, digital whiteboard & video conferencing.

The Walter Harris Memorial Branch received new flooring, and a renewed children's area.

Looking ahead, keep watch for our new 3-D printer, complemented by Cricut machines, as our Makerspace starts to take shape. Schedule a session to learn how to utilize library technology, get help with your personal devices, or join one of our many programs.

Whether you prefer visiting us in person or accessing our services 24/7 through our website, you can borrow from our physical and digital collections, engage with us on social media, and subscribe to our updates.

I want to thank the staff at GHPL for their dedication and commitment to providing a high level of service and an enthusiasm for lifelong learning. I also want to thank the Library Board who invest much of their time in supporting and sustaining an effective library system, as well as the Municipality who is our most important partner. The coming year is sure to be an exciting one for GHPL as we continue to seek new opportunities to inspire people, connect with the community, and provide welcoming spaces for all residents of Grey Highlands.